



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Watershed Management Study – Upper Mississippi River (Itasca to L&D2)



One of many regulated Mississippi Headwaters Lakes

Contact

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Location/Description

The Upper Mississippi River, from Lake Itasca, Minn. to Lock and Dam 2 at Hastings, Minn., is the area for this study and is a river reach of the Upper Mississippi that is faced with many land and water use development pressures that jeopardize the quality of the resource. This study area is inclusive of the Federal Headwaters Reservoirs and Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.

Authority

A resolution of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, dated April 15, 1999, provided the authority for this Watershed Management Study.

Status

The Watershed Management Reconnaissance study was completed in June 2001. The reconnaissance study identified specific federal interest in 1) Basin-scale planning for watershed and water quality management, 2) Headwaters system reservoir regulation, 3) Water supply protection, 4) Metropolitan Twin Cities surface water management study, 5) River corridor restoration in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and 6) Watershed-scale planning for ecological restoration, water quality and watershed management. Council) and for two watershed studies (Minnehaha Creek Watershed and South Washington County Watershed).

Project Management Plans and Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreements for each of the studies will be negotiated in late 2001. The feasibility studies will take 4-5 years to complete, are expected to identify economically justify outputs and a variety of Federal water resource projects.

Additional

The Mississippi River has tremendous national historic significance and reflects an ongoing story of the American continent from Native American, to European exploration, to intensive modern multiple uses of this resource. Now there is a growing recognition that economic value to the people of the region is dependant on a healthy Upper Mississippi river environment and that future coordinated and comprehensive land use and water management is critical to continued clean and productive use of the river.

Feasibility study work would compile and evaluate existing plans and reports; inventory and obtain selected spatial data; inventory and identify problem flooding areas; forecast future changes in land cover and land use; apply the Corps-developed Watershed Management System and related water quality computer models to quantify watershed hydrology and materials transport and fate processes for existing conditions; identify soil loss, nutrient source and water quality problem areas; examine alternatives to protect and restore wetland and river habitats; and identify a set of watershed and water quality management alternatives.

The Reconnaissance Study showed tremendous potential for a multi-agency partnership to prepare comprehensive basin management plan that address system lake level regulations, water quality, water quantity, and water use issues. However, at this time no regional or State local sponsor/s has been able to sign the cost sharing agreement to partner in these comprehensive types of studies. As a result, the Reconnaissance Report concluded it is not possible at this time to proceed into such basin scale feasibility studies.

Fiscal

The Reconnaissance Study was funded 100% by the Federal Government (\$175,000). Feasibility studies will be cost-shared 50% -50% with non-Federal sponsors. Project design and construction costs are to be cost shared with the non-Federal sponsors and the operation and maintenance costs are to be the responsibility of the non-Federal sponsors. Currently it is anticipated that funds of \$1.4 million Federal and \$1.4 million non-Federal will be needed to complete the three feasibility studies with the identified non-Federal sponsors.